

JEFFERSON JOURNAL

September/October 2019

Sense & Sinsemilla

*Is Cannabis Really
Good For You?*

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By Jennifer Margulis

So how effective is cannabis as "medicine"? And is using it actually good for your health? There's no question that some people enjoy myriad health benefits from using it. But there's also evidence that cannabis use has its downsides. Keeping in mind that every user has a different experience, that because it's been illegal for so long cannabis has been understudied, and that new science is emerging all the time, let's see if we can add some sense to the sinsemilla question.



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Newsroom News

It's been a busy time at JPR. We've made significant progress advancing the expansion of our newsroom, with the goal of strengthening our local and regional journalism for both our radio listeners and digital audience.

Expansion of the newsroom has centered around two main initiatives: hiring a full-time news director to provide the leadership needed to improve both the breadth and depth of our independent news gathering capability and hiring an additional regional reporter to increase our reporting capacity. Effective May 1, following a national search, Liam Moriarty took the helm as JPR news director. You likely know Liam's voice and work since he's been part of JPR news on and off for the better part of a decade, first as news director of JPR's mostly student and volunteer newsroom from 2002-05 and most recently since 2013 as our sole regional reporter. Liam's reporting has been recognized by numerous professional journalism organizations, including the Associated Press, the Society for Professional Journalists and the Radio Television Digital News Association. He's been awarded a number of notable journalism fellowships, including a Metcalf Science Fellowship and European Union Center for Excellence Fellowship and his work has earned eight regional Edward R. Murrow awards for outstanding achievements in electronic journalism. Liam takes the news director baton from Geoffrey Riley, who has been handling news director duties very ably on an interim basis alongside his main responsibilities as host of the *Jefferson Exchange*. Geoff has now returned to his hosting assignment full-time, giving him the focus he needs to make the show as good as it can be for listeners.

In recent weeks we also completed our hiring process for two full-time regional reporters, one that's been planned as part of our newsroom expansion and one to fill the position Liam left when he became news director. The successful candidates for these positions are two talented journalists—April Ehrlich and Erik Neumann.

You may be familiar with April's work since she's been with us for a couple of years now hosting *Morning Edition*, co-producing the *Jefferson Exchange*, and reporting when she's had time. April will now be able to dedicate all her time to reporting, which we're really thrilled about since she's done excellent work in the limited reporting time she's had available. April's background includes stints as a newspaper reporter in Payette, Idaho; Ontario, Oregon; and Roseburg, Oregon. She came to us in 2016 with little public radio experience but with a keen ear for audio storytelling, strong reporting skills and a desire to learn. In her time at JPR, April has contributed to our coverage

We'll also strive to develop deeper organizational capacity and expertise to tell stories that create the driveway moments for which public radio is famous.

on a wide range of topics, including last year's deadly wildfires in Northern California. Her reporting on the Carr Fire in Redding aired on NPR stations around the country and contributed to JPR News winning a regional Edward R. Murrow award for continuing coverage of the fire and its aftermath. April is currently working on a series -- funded by the Annenberg Center for Health Journalism at USC—that explores the impact of wildfires on some of the region's more vulnerable populations, including non-English speakers, people with disabilities and homeless people.

Erik Neumann comes to us from KUER, the NPR member station in Salt Lake City, Utah. Erik is a native of the Pacific Northwest and brings over a decade of experience in print and audio storytelling to JPR. He has a Master's in Journalism from UC Berkeley. During his time at KUER, he focused much of his reporting on health care, including stories on the impact of health policy on people's lives, personal stories about the opioid epidemic and portraits of rural life where access to health care is limited. He's been a frequent contributor to NPR and Kaiser Health News, a nationwide health care reporting collaboration. He's reported on reproductive health in Burkina Faso, West Africa and he recently completed a year-long health reporting fellowship with the Association of Health Care Journalists. In addition to his health reporting, Erik has covered diverse subjects, including public lands, the environment and the arts. He's also been a producer and teacher of young reporters at Youth Radio, a media education program in Oakland, California and was the producer and creator of *True Stories*, a night of live, non-fiction storytelling.

I look forward to hearing the new work JPR's growing newsroom will create. The linchpin of this work will be timely, fact-based, independent reporting consistent with the highest journalistic standards for fairness and accuracy. We'll also strive to develop deeper organizational capacity and expertise to tell stories that create the driveway moments for which public radio is famous—stories that explain complex regional issues, help us walk in our neighbors' shoes, build bridges across culture and class and take listeners on journeys that celebrate this fascinating place we call home.



Paul Westhelle is
JPR's Executive Director.

A low-angle photograph of cannabis plants against a sunset sky. The plants are silhouetted against a bright, orange and yellow horizon, with the sky transitioning to a pale blue. The leaves are serrated and fan-shaped, typical of cannabis. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

Sense & Sinsemilla

Is Cannabis Really Good For You?

By Jennifer Margulis



Since plants cross-pollinate and new varieties are being grown all the time, it's not always obvious what grows are "hot" and what are "just hemp"

When she was 46, a woman we'll call Hope (who asked to remain anonymous for reasons which will become obvious) was finding it impossible to fall and stay asleep at night. She was working full-time, raising a child with extreme special needs, and dealing with worrisome health issues of her own. She had Lyme disease, as well as retinitis pigmentosa, a condition which resulted in the loss of vision in her left eye, and herniated disks in her back. On top of all that, Hope was leaving a job she'd had for over a decade to start a new career.

Desperate for rest, Hope tried every sleep remedy she could—from prescription medications like Ambien to holistic remedies like valerian root. When those didn't work she turned to meditation and hypnosis.

Nothing helped.

Sleep-deprived and increasingly anxious, she was miserable.

So when a homeopath recommended she try cannabis, even though marijuana was (and still is) illegal in her state and she was herself the director of an addiction drug clinic, Hope was willing to try anything. Medical marijuana was legal where she lived, but not to treat symptoms related to Lyme or insomnia.

Hope found a secret group of users of medical marijuana on Facebook to advise her and managed to buy organically grown quality-tested cannabis illegally from an internet vendor. It came in a taffy-like blob which she heated on the stove top with an equal amount of coconut oil. She put the tincture in a bottle, and put one drop under her tongue.

Twenty minutes later she was fast asleep.

"It was the first time I slept really well in years," she told me when we talked by phone. "I woke up the next day, and it was like heaven ... It was incredible. I started to look forward to being able to sleep."

That was five years ago. Hope has been using cannabis ever since.

When Ballot Measure 91 passed in 2014 the recreational use of cannabis became legal in Oregon. California, though it set the trend to legalize *medical marijuana* over two decades ago, was the last hold-out on the West Coast to legalize *recreational* use of pot. Legalization in California came in November 2016 when a majority of voters approved the Adult Use of Marijuana Act. California dispensaries finally started selling marijuana for recreational use on January 1, 2018, to great fanfare. According to the *New York Times*, some 200 enthusiastic customers lined up at an Oakland dispensary at dawn, eager to buy pot.

Despite enjoying enthusiastic support across the country, cannabis remains illegal at the federal level. The Feds classify it as a “Schedule 1” narcotic, along with heroin, LSD, and ecstasy. Still, with the change in California law, recreational cannabis use is now legal up and down the West Coast, as well as in Alaska.

What that means for Southern Oregon—where I live—is that you’re apt to see dispensaries on practically every other corner in town and acres of fields being planted in rural areas. Just this week my editor reported seeing new hemp fields on North Phoenix Road, West Main Street in Medford on the way to Jacksonville, Taylor Road in Central Point, and along I-5 between Ashland and Medford.

In the midst of this cannabis craze, a robust industry has grown up around the plant—including growers, harvesters, “trimmers” (who process the plants), and retailers. Then there are the graphics on Instagram and Facebook extolling its virtues and the huge billboards on I-5 advertising retail cannabis stores. To say nothing of headlines: “how weed helped me get in the best shape of my life” and “7 incredible health benefits of marijuana.”

Some of your friends and acquaintances undoubtedly believe cannabis is a miracle plant. As one small town city manager told me, “It’s surprising how quickly it’s getting into the mainstream. I was at Easter with my wife’s family and my 85-year-old father-in-law came out with a CBD product. ‘For pain,’ he told us. ‘I use it on my feet!’”

At the same time, you likely have other people in your life who believe cannabis is a leafy devil, leading to spaced-out, unfocused, unhappy people who are at best wasting their money

and their time and at worst are shirking their responsibilities, sleepwalking through their lives, and committing crimes after getting stoned. One criminal defense lawyer I spoke to for this article (who also wanted to remain anonymous) hates the stuff and told me cannabis use has been involved in many violent crimes his clients commit.

How do you separate the hype from the health benefits? What’s cannabis actually good for, and what is hot air? For all its uses and proponents, cannabis is a surprisingly complicated plant that’s actually not that well understood.

“When it comes to cannabis I always talk about confirmation bias,” says Matt Vogel, 44, a professional health educator and adjunct instructor at Southern Oregon University (SOU) in Ashland. “People really seek out the information they already believe and that they want to hear.”

Vogel, who does substance use trainings with community groups, professional organizations, and high school and college students across the country, thinks there’s more bias and emotion surrounding this substance than almost any other. “Sometimes it’s really tricky to get into a rational conversation about it,” Vogel admits.

So how effective is cannabis as “medicine”?

And is using it actually good for your health?

There’s no question that some people enjoy myriad health benefits from using it. But there’s also evidence that cannabis use has its downsides. Keeping in mind that every user has a different experience, that because it’s been illegal for so long cannabis has been understudied, and that new science is emerging all the time, let’s see if we can add some sense to the sinsemilla question.

“What responsible growers and health care professionals seem to agree on, however, is that the more high-quality ingredients used in making tinctures and preparations, the more likely they are to have health benefits.”





PHOTO COURTESY OF DIRTY ARM FARM

Jamie and Melissa Syken of Dirty Arm Farm, in their 11,500 square foot greenhouse.

Cannabis, a Primer

First, some background.

Cannabis is thought to be native to Asia. While some reports say the plant was grown and harvested 12,000 years ago, according to research published this June in the journal *Science Advances*, the earliest scientifically verified evidence of human consumption of cannabis was found in a 2,500-year-old cemetery in Central Asia (in what is now far western China). Analyzing the contents of wooden bowls at a burial site, an international team of scientists found this Jirzankal cannabis contained psychoactive properties.

The Vikings used cannabis for pain relief during childbirth, according to Barney Warf, Professor of Geography and Atmospheric Science at the University of Kansas, who explained to a journalist at LiveScience that both hemp and psychoactive marijuana were widely used in Ancient China and that cannabis came to North America via the southern route. In the Americas the production of cannabis was widespread from the 1600s to the late 1800s. Colonists used the hemp plant to make rope, sails, and clothing. In America in the late 1800s and early 1900s, cannabis was also in many medicines sold at pharmacies.

While some insist there's a categorical and hard stop difference between hemp and marijuana, taxonomically hemp and marijuana are the same plant. Since plants cross-pollinate and new varieties are being grown all the time, it's not always obvious what grows are "hot" and what are "just hemp" (which makes growers who need licensing for different products very nervous). Most hemp varieties have very little, if any, psychoac-

The ABCs of Cannabis's Medical Benefits

It's hard to separate fact from fiction when it comes to the medical benefits of cannabis. What responsible growers and health care professionals seem to agree on, however, is that the more high-quality ingredients used in making tinctures and preparations, the more likely they are to have health benefits. If you try a product and it doesn't work, the quality may be to blame. If you think cannabis might help you, consider trying different products until you find one that works.

Potential health benefits of cannabis include:

- Aiding with anxiety
- Battling symptoms associated with autism
- Curtailling vomiting and nausea
- Decreasing insomnia and restless sleep
- Easing epileptic seizures
- Exciting the appetite
- Fighting (lessening) symptoms related to cerebral palsy and Lou Gehrig's Disease (ALS)
- Getting a handle on pain
- Helping the body fight some cancers
- Improving irritable bowel syndrome
- Increasing sexual desire



tive components, but do contain CBD, "cannabidiol," which is considered medicinal but not psychoactive.

Vogel explains to me that when you smoke or eat cannabis, it is the resin-secreting flowers of the female plant that contain the highest concentration of the bioactive substance that makes you feel "stoned" or "high." This substance, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, is better known as THC. You probably knew that already. But what you may not know is that THC is just one of the many cannabinoids that have now been identified, and one of several known to be psychoactive.

What are cannabinoids? These are compounds that are similar to the endocannabinoids naturally produced in our bodies. The human body's innate "endocannabinoid system" is involved in many aspects of establishing and maintaining health.



Potential Harms of Cannabis

Most daily users insist that cannabis is harmless, which it may be *for them*. But, like with any other medicine, whether plant-based or synthetic, side effects have been reported. The most extreme condition affecting heavy users is cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome. This poorly understood problem results in cyclical episodes of severe nausea, abdominal pain, and vomiting. A 2018 study of frequent users at a New York City hospital found that over 30% of those who had smoked marijuana more than 20 times in the previous month suffered from cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome. CHS, which is worsened by using more, can be treated with IV fluids for dehydration and with hot baths or showers to lessen the symptoms.

Other potential harms of cannabis include:

- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Agitation
- Coordination issues
- Depersonalization: a disorder where you feel detached or estranged from yourself
- Derealization: a disturbance where you experience the world as unreal
- Dry mouth
- Hallucinations
- Impaired reaction time, performance, and judgment
- Inability to plan
- Increased risk of other addictions
- Increased risk of schizophrenia
- Increased impulsivity
- Lack of motivation
- Poor attention
- Poor memory and decreased ability to learn new things
- Psychosis
- Red eyes
- Tachycardia (fast heart beat)

This system, according to an international team of researchers from Vermont, Great Britain, and Italy, writing in the science journal *PLoS One*,

“... modulates embryological development, neural plasticity, neuroprotection, immunity and inflammation, apoptosis and carcinogenesis, pain and emotional memory, and most importantly from the viewpoint of recent drug development: hunger, feeding, and metabolism.”

Translation: Your endocannabinoid system helps you think, fight diseases, feel less pain, eat, sleep, and relax. So when you consume cannabis, the cannabinoids in the plant itself are thought to attach themselves to the innate cannabinoid receptors on cells throughout your body and to help with these processes.

As if that’s not complicated enough, cannabis plants contain over 100 cannabinoids that can affect different receptors, and new cannabinoids are being discovered all the time. So it makes sense scientifically that cannabis may offer a broad range of health benefits.

Buying Weed in Weed

At La Florista on Main Street in Weed, California (a lumber town named after its founder, Abner Weed), customers must stop at the front and show ID. The entranceway has a comfy gray couch with white throw pillows on one side and a counter on the other, like a hotel lobby. You have to be 21 to enter.

Walk through the closed doors and inside is a 10,000 square foot retail store where you can buy cannabis products of all kinds, as well as brightly colored hippie dresses, accessories, incense, books, body oils, and more. The owner of La Florista, Elizabeth Tabor, 53, tells me between 80 and 150 customers come into the store, which has been open for just over a year, daily.

Tabor is an energetic businesswoman with ambitious plans. Her goal is to transform Weed, an economically depressed northern California town with fewer than 3,000 inhabitants, into a tourist haven. Instead of empty store fronts, she’d like to see an old-fashioned candy store, art galleries, and upscale restaurants.

“I have celebrity A-listers who have stopped here, and they turn around and get back into their cars because there’s no other shopping downtown,” she laments. “Main Street needs to be revitalized. My goal is to bring it back.”

Cannabis for Pain

Tabor, who’s been interested in alternative medicine for over a decade, is outspoken about what she thinks are the most important health benefits of cannabis. She tells me cannabis really helps with pain, and can help people wean themselves down or off highly addictive opioid pain relief, like Oxycontin and Norco.

Cannabis, Tabor insists, is a safer, less addictive, and equally effective substitute pain medication and a much better choice than opioids, though it may take a few weeks or even months to get the dosing right. Helping addicts wean off opioids is also a benefit that Paul Thomas, MD, an addiction specialist based in Portland, Oregon, has also seen firsthand. (Thomas and I wrote a book together, *The Addiction Spectrum*.)



PHOTO BY JENNIFER MARGULIS

Elizabeth Tabor, owner of La Florista, believes the popularity of cannabis can help revitalize Weed.

“Cannabis can put you in another place where you’re not focusing on the pain,” explains Jamie Syken, 41, who co-owns Dirty Arm Farm in Southern Oregon with his wife Melissa. “If you’re in a lot of pain, you can still laugh and enjoy yourself. It’s not necessarily a pain killer, but it’s more how it puts your head space.”

Elizabeth Tabor tells me she’s also seen cannabis help people dealing with post-traumatic stress disorders. At the same time, she says, some of the claimed health benefits of cannabis are exaggerated.

“A lot of companies take advantage of the letters ‘CBD’ and exploit consumers,” Tabor insists, mentioning a CBD face mask sold via pyramid marketing that has a minuscule amount of CBD in it. “What the hell good is it going to do in a face mask?”

Perhaps it won’t take away wrinkles, but 2016 research published in the *Journal of Pain* found that cannabis lotion given to rats trans-dermally offered relief from inflammation and pain, lending credence to reports that cannabinoids help with arthritis.

Canada’s Arthritis Society estimates that two thirds of Canadians who use medical cannabis use it to manage arthritis symptoms. At the same time, a 2019 review article published in the journal *Current Opinion in Rheumatology* this April found that some cannabinoids have an anti-inflammatory effect while other cannabinoids may actually promote inflammation. The researchers, calling for further research, conclude: “Cannabi-

noids might be a suitable treatment for rheumatoid arthritis, but it is important to target the right receptors in the right place.”

Cannabis for Cancer and Seizures

As anyone who’s gotten the munchies from smoking pot can confirm, cannabis has long been used as an effective appetite enhancer and nausea inhibitor, helping patients who are trying to gain weight or who are undergoing chemotherapy. Research has also shown that using cannabis oil on basal cell skin cancers can inhibit tumor growth.

Another area where users and scientists seem to increasingly agree is the usefulness of cannabis in people who suffer from seizures, as well as to treat severe symptoms—like head-banging, self-harm, and other out-of-control behaviors—associated with autism.

“Cannabis seems to be really beneficial to things that are really hard for traditional medicine to treat,” Melissa Syken, 41, co-owner of Dirty Arm Farm, puts in. I interviewed the Sykens (whom I first met when they owned Growing Green Baby in Ashland) while they were driving back from their processing facility in White City, Oregon.

Cannabis plants contain over 100 cannabinoids that can affect different receptors, and new cannabinoids are being discovered all the time.

Melissa tells me that their customers with nerve disorders, autoimmune conditions like multiple sclerosis, and cerebral palsy have benefited from cannabis products.

But, the Sykens both insist, quality matters. A lot. Dirty Arm Farm, which has an 11,500 square foot greenhouse and harvests three times a year, tests its products for pesticides and fungicides, as well as for potency. While most producers dry the plant first, Jamie and Melissa explain that Dirty Arm Farm uses fresh cannabis—not dried—to make their products. The Sykens say that this practice is essential to preserving the plant’s terpenes and keeping cannabinoids from degrading.

“It’s like fresh fruit versus dry fruit,” Jamie explains. “By processing it fresh-frozen you’re giving people as much of a full spectrum effect as possible.” The Sykens caution against buying CBD products that are made from an isolate instead of a full spectrum of cannabinoids. Jamie says that inferior products made from old and degraded plant material, whether cannabis or hemp, are unlikely to be medically helpful.

“You want the cannabis with the ‘entourage effect,’ which means you have all the cannabinoids that that plant produced, as well as all the terpenes ... and [the thousands of] unidentified chemicals in the product,” Jamie says. “All that is gone when you make an isolate. You’re literally left with a white powder. All the medical miracles we’ve been hearing about ... are from medical marijuana, not isolates. Not the Diet Cannabis that they’re pushing now.”

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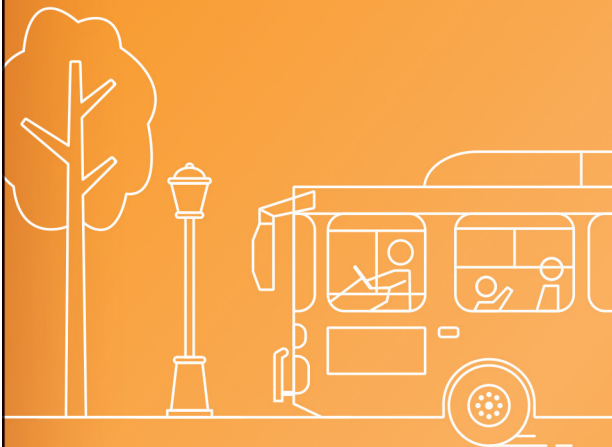


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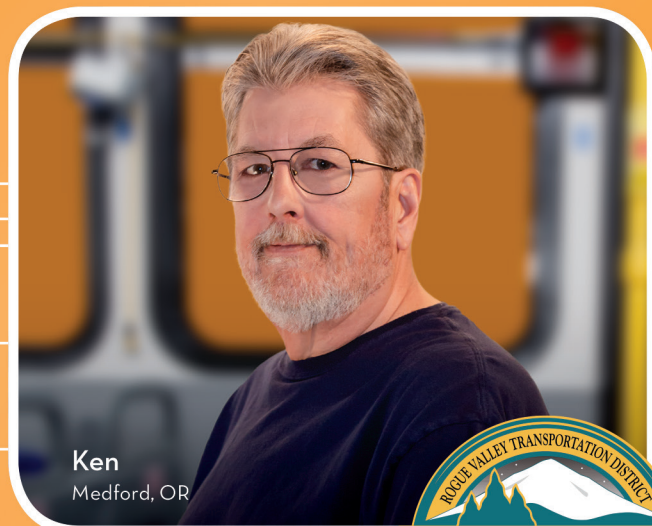
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While some insist there's a categorical and hard stop difference between hemp and marijuana, taxonomically hemp and marijuana are the same plant.

Kenneth Palfini, 67, owner of Farmers Insurance in Mount Shasta, California, has firsthand experience with medical marijuana. Palfini, who is also Mayor of Weed, tells me he's used cannabis on and off for 50 years. In 2007 when he was fighting leukemia he used cannabis as a way to relax. After the cancer went into remission, he continued to use it recreationally.

"My use is similar to someone's use of alcohol," Palfini, who describes himself as a lifelong conservative, explains. "I don't drink very much but every once in a while I'll have a beer, and every once in a while I'll have a toké."

As much as Palfini believes the legalization of cannabis is good for Weed's economy, he also admits that between 30 and 40 percent of his constituents in Siskiyou County are *not* happy about having marijuana in Weed. These folks believe cannabis is a gateway drug to heroin and other bad behaviors. They're also afraid children will have easier access and be more likely to try it.

"It's founded in a lot of emotion," Palfini says, insisting that kids have always had access to cannabis, even before it was legalized, and recommending parents stay vigilant. "Part of parenting is being aware."

Keep Cannabis Away From Kids

But the concern that children and young teens could be harmed by exposure to cannabis is one that many people share. One parent tells me that a neighbor's 9-year-old spent two days vomiting after eating a bar of "special chocolate" the parents left on the coffee table. That was an accidental ingestion. But there's a growing body of scientific research showing that the younger you are when you start using cannabis the more problematic it can be.

Matt Vogel from SOU is concerned about children getting access to high potency concentrates and using too much of an edible. It can take a long time to feel the effects of edibles, Vogel explains, and inexperienced users may inadvertently eat too much. This happened to my friend's elderly mother, who ate so many cannabis cookies (because she didn't feel any effect) that she woke up in the middle of the night stoned, panicked, and having heart palpitations. "The effects of taking too much can be psychologically devastating," Vogel adds.

But, he goes on, the biggest concern is not a bad trip. Cannabis use in young people has been correlated with schizo-



phrenia. Vogel calls this a "chicken and the egg question," as we don't know if young people prone to psychosis seek out cannabis to self-medicate or if young people who would not suffer from psychosis become psychotic from cannabis use. Regardless, studies have consistently shown that the younger you are when you start using cannabis the greater the chance of suffering from schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder, and psychotic episodes.

I ask my 20-year-old, who's majoring in psychology in college, what she thinks about young people using cannabis. She has friends who suffer from mental health issues. They don't have medical marijuana permits and recreational marijuana had not been legalized in New York. Though New York moved to decriminalize marijuana use just as this article was going to press, her friends had been using it illegally. Some in order to get through the stress of being at a high-pressure school. Others use it in place of anti-depressants.

"They're self-medicating for depression and anxiety," Hesperus says, adding that she knows at least half a dozen people, mostly in their twenties, who smoke weed more than five times a week. "Inhaling plant debris is obviously not good for your lung health," she says. But, she continues, it's easier to be around these friends when they're stoned because they're more relaxed.

Jamie Syken believes one of the best health benefits to cannabis is its psychoactive effect. "When you're stressed, it feels like there's no way to escape yourself," he says. "Sometimes it's hard to stop beating ourselves up. There's no hang-over and it literally can allow you to relax. The absolute biggest thing with cannabis is life-quality improvement."



A regular contributor to the *Jefferson Journal*, Jennifer Margulis graduated from Cornell University, earned a Master's degree from the University of California at Berkeley, and a PhD from Emory University. She is a science reporter and book author and her articles have been published in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and on the cover of *Smithsonian Magazine*. Her most recent book, *The Addiction Spectrum: A Compassionate, Holistic Approach to Recovery* (HarperOne), is co-authored with Paul Thomas, MD, and includes a chapter on cannabis. Some of the material in this article was adapted from that book. Learn more at www.JenniferMargulis.net.



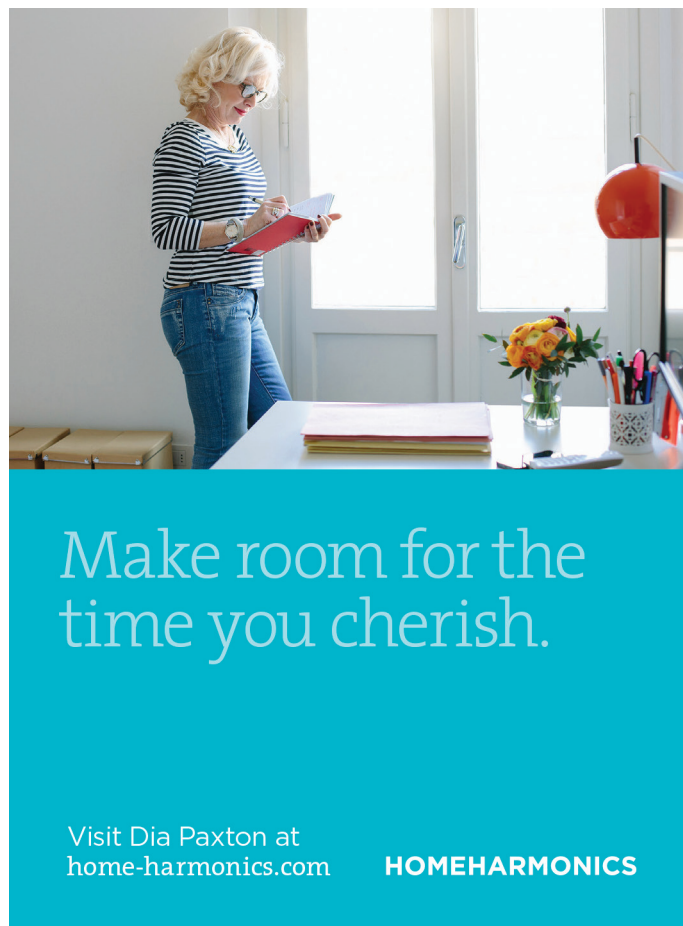
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JES BURNS AND
CASSANDRA PROFITA

One recent analysis estimated the average American ingests 74,000 to 121,000 pieces of microplastic per year.

Hunt For Answers Shows Oregon Rivers Not Immune To Microplastic Pollution

OPB is examining the ways plastic is altering our relationship with the environment and what we can do about it.

We decided to do 15-minute samples because it's what some scientists had done in Europe. We didn't think about the consequences.

Like, what it might feel like to be the one sitting on a submerged rock shelf in the Rogue River, just barely winning a stand-off with the current that wants to yank the plankton net out of your hands.

And you've been there for seven cold, wet minutes, and you've still got eight cold, wet minutes to go. Then you'll have to do it two more times in this same spot before you can move to another location.

But we settled on 15-minute samples because rivers are big and what we were looking for is tiny.

Filtering the river water with an ultra-fine meshed net is one of the few ways available to determine if, and to what extent Oregon's rivers are polluted with plastic—specifically microplastic, which by definition are less than 5 millimeters long—about the width of your pinky nail.

Some of the plastics littering Oregon's rivers are easy to see. But scientists are also finding microscopic plastic pollution in rivers across the globe.

When my OPB colleague Cassandra Profita and I started asking questions about microplastic pollution in Oregon's rivers in the summer of 2018, we couldn't find any answers.

"Most of the microplastics sampling work has all been done in the oceans," said Eric Dexter, a doctoral candidate at Washington State University Vancouver. "More recently researchers are starting to turn their attention toward lakes and rivers."

That trend hadn't reached Oregon. Nobody had looked, or at least no one had published any data at the time.

So we decided to embark on our own scientific journey to test for microplastics in some of Oregon's most iconic rivers: the Columbia, Willamette, Deschutes and Rogue.

Even though we strongly suspected we'd find microplastics in our rivers, our results were something of a clean sweep: we found microplastics at every site—even in the most pristine, unpopulated area high up in the Rogue River watershed.

But hotspots did emerge. At the top of the list for both concentration of microplastics and pieces passing per hour: the Willamette River in Portland.

Based on our findings, we estimate that more than 57 million microplastics passed through the city on the day we took



OPB's Cassandra Profita and Jes Burns look for microplastics at a Portland State University lab.

PHOTO: TODD SONFLIETH/OPB

the samples, making their way toward the Columbia River and the Pacific Ocean.

Microplastics In Oregon Rivers

Estimated number of microplastic fibers and particles passing each location on the day of sampling.

	FIBERS (per day)	PARTICLES (per day)
Willamette River (Portland)	57,435,380	1,430,297
Columbia River (St. Helens)	50,087,123	1,448,801
Willamette River (Albany)	2,133,172	2,934,584
Deschutes River (near La Pine)	73,280	2,714
Deschutes River (Tumalo State Park)	36,648	18,869
Rogue River (Grants Pass)	33,254	23,278
Willamette River (Fall Creek near Jasper)	3,477	1,159
Rogue River (near Union Creek)	*	22,439

* For this site, there was more fiber contamination collected from the air in field and lab control samples than in the river. Consequently, we cannot determine if there were microfibers in the river.

CREDIT: JES BURNS/OPB

Down To Earth

Continued from page 15

The Problem

Plastic is a tricky thing. For all intents and purposes, once it's manufactured, it doesn't go away. It just breaks down into smaller and smaller particles. Once it breaks down, it becomes much more difficult to remove from the environment.

An increasing amount of plastic is ending up in our oceans. It's floating in great patches in the middle of the Pacific, it's washing up on our beaches, and it's inside the shellfish that we eat.

A 2016 report by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the World Economic Forum predicts the ocean will contain more plastic by weight than fish by 2050.

Portland State University scientist Elise Granek studies plastic pollution in oysters and clams. Her lab is helping us with the project.

"We are finding microplastics in multiple different kinds of marine organisms that live along the shore, so in the estuaries," she said. "It's possible that... some of those microplastics are coming from rivers that enter the estuaries."

The study of these kinds of plastics in the environment is relatively new, scientifically speaking. We're beginning to get a sense overall of how extensive the pollution is, but there's still much to learn about the potential consequences.



TODD SONFLETH/OPB

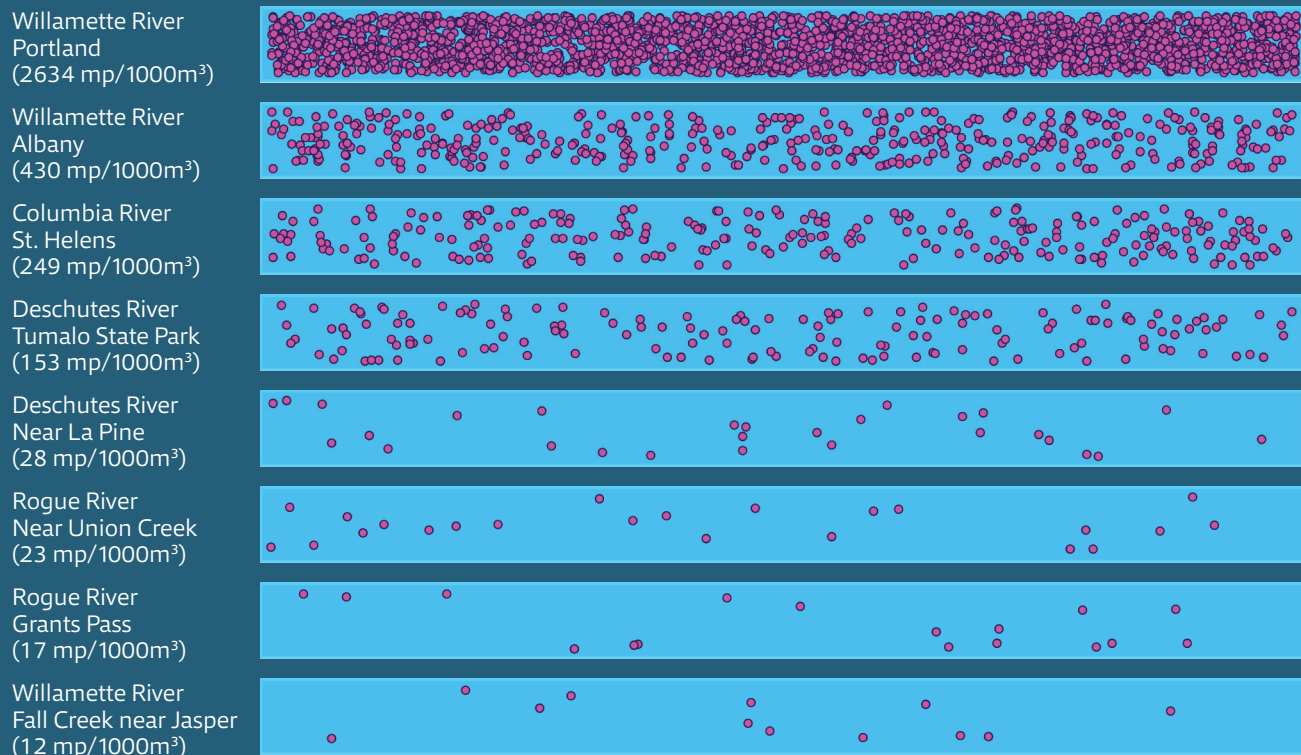
Microplastic fibers are less than 5mm and often show up a vivid color under the microscope.

"We do know that there's a number of chemical compounds that are used in the manufacture of plastics, that then are in those pieces of plastic that get ingested by animals," Granek said.

Granek's lab at PSU has found microplastics in oysters grown in Oregon. Other studies have shown that certain kinds of microplastics can impair reproduction in Pacific oysters and

Microplastic Concentrations In Oregon Rivers

Estimated relative abundance of microplastic pollution per 1000 m³ (mp/1000m³) of river water.



JES BURNS/OPB

Relative microplastic concentration is based on river samples collected in September 2018. Findings were extrapolated using the mean average water flow as measured at the nearest USGS or Oregon Water Resources Department flow meter.



Locations where OPB sampled rivers for microplastics.

TONY SCHICK/OPB

can induce neurotoxicity and DNA damage in a type of clam common in Europe.

What that means for humans who eat these creatures or ingest or breathe in microplastics from other sources is still unknown. One recent analysis estimated the average American ingests 74,000 to 121,000 pieces of microplastic per year.

The Plan

We tested a total of eight sites along Oregon's most populated rivers: two spots on the Deschutes, two on the Rogue, three in the Willamette River watershed and one on the Columbia, just downriver of Portland and Vancouver, Washington.

The sample locations were chosen intentionally to cover the rivers both above and below the major population centers to see if and how much of a difference cities and towns make.

Plastics are getting into the water in a few ways. First is litter, plain and simple. Escaped plastics from the fishing and oyster industry are relatively common, as is plastic waste from industrial uses, like the raw plastic pellets used in larger-scale plastic manufacturing and molding.

Another way is septic systems and wastewater treatment plants.

"We're pumping everything that comes in. Wastewater, organic matter, inorganic matter, trash, plastic. It's everything that goes down the drain whether it should or not," said Chris Maher, an operations analyst at the Rock Creek Wastewater treatment plant in Hillsboro.

This includes fibers from synthetic clothing - like fleece, nylon and polyester - that break off in the washing machine. The

plant uses sand filters to remove fine particles, which he says takes out 90%-to-99% of the plastic.

"If you're talking about fibers, that stuff will pass through a filter like that," he said.

When these "pass through" at Rock Creek, they flow into the Tualatin River, which connects to the Willamette, which connects to the Columbia, which then flows to the ocean.

Membrane filtration technology is available that would filter out more of the plastic (and essentially ensure water meets drinking-quality standards), but there's a balancing act facilities like Rock Creek are considering.

"Obviously that's a cost," Maher said, referring to the infrastructure and energy expenditures that would be needed to install a system like that.

He adds to this the unknowns associated with microplastics.

"We don't know the human health effect of ingesting this plastic. We don't know [if] the plastic acts as a transport vehicle for other pollutants, other pathogens or anything like that. Research is very new on it, so hence the reason we're not actively designing for plastic removal," he said.

Because of the limited number of river samples we're able to take for this project, we're remaining cautious about what conclusions can be drawn from our results.

Our sampling won't tell us where plastics are coming from, but we do hope it reveals if there's plastic present in the water and how much is passing downstream.

The Results

"We're looking for something that looks like it shouldn't be there. Like bright colors or really white or really standard shape," Dorothy Horn said, explaining what microplastics would look like under the microscope.

Horn is a Ph.D. candidate at Portland State University. She works in the lab that's processing the samples and verifying if what we visually identify as plastic actually is. PSU undergraduates Ashley Peterson and Amy Valine were invaluable to our project as well.

Even though Peterson chemically dissolved the living material in all the samples, the petri dishes are still thick with organic-looking sludge.

"It's like hunting through the forest," Horn says as she starts poking through the dish under the microscope with a needle-like probe.

Despite this, it only takes a few brief seconds for the first piece of plastic to appear.

"That is white and that totally to me looks like a piece of plastic bag," she says.

The discovery is both exciting and horrifying—thrilling to see the fruits of hours of sampling and then stomach-knotting to realize that our rivers aren't immune to this nearly-invisible pollution.

In all we found two kinds of microplastics in our samples: fibers and particles. Fibers come off things like clothing, fishing nets and ropes. The particles come from other kinds of plastic breaking down into smaller and smaller pieces. There were considerably more plastic fibers than particles present in our samples.

That's not the only thing to glean from our citizen/journalist science project.

Continued on page 31



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The title of this column is “hello” in Ojibwe, Swahili, and Rumanian. If you like, I could say “hello” to you in Hindi, Inuktitut, and Serbian, too, and, in fact, in 69 other languages. I could ask you your name in all those languages, and I could say goodbye to you. In other words, I have learned how to say, “Hello,” “What’s your name?” and “Goodbye” in 75 of the world’s languages.

I have my granddaughter to thank for this. She set me this task for my 75 x 75 project (doing 75 things of 75 repetitions each before my 75th birthday last July (see thingstodoinmy75thyear.blogpost.com). I loved doing this project! I loved her for giving it to me. Learning these phrases took me all around the world, looking for which of the world's 6500 languages to learn, so I got a little geography lesson along with glimpses into the languages themselves, in all their varieties. Oh, wonderful, wonderful world!

I started on July 21, 2018, with languages that would be easy for me: Swedish, Finnish, Danish, Norwegian, and Icelandic. My method was to find five languages at a time with YouTube clips showing me how to pronounce them, then make a print-out with my own pronunciation guides under the correct spellings. When I had memorized those, I made flash cards of them, which I took on my daily walks. The bulk of cards grew slowly. Sometimes I would get languages mixed up, but repetition did wonders. The earlier languages I learned that I had thought so difficult—Basque, Welsh, Estonian—were soon as comfortable on my tongue as French and German. Now Tamil is as easily said as Hebrew, and Togalog as Korean.

Near duplicate phrases were common: “Name” is “ingoa” in Maori, “igoa” in Samoan, and “inoa” in Hawaiian. Some variation of “salam” for “hello” is frequent in Near Eastern languages, and a lot of languages use “ciao” for “goodbye.” The Chinese, Vietnamese, and Xhosa say “Goodbye” with a version of “bye-bye.”

My favorite was to ask, “What is your name” in Somali, with the visually unpronounceable “Magacago musuu xahay,” actually pronounced as a wonderfully rhythmic “MAH-ga HAH-ga HREE-a-hay.”

My favorite way of greeting someone is in Ojibwe: “Anin” (Ah NEEN), which means, “I see your light.” My least favorite way of saying goodbye is in Balinese, when one is supposed to say, “Om, shanti, shanti, shanti, om.” “Say it three times,” emphasized the man on YouTube. It’s very respectful, but I wonder if teenagers in Bali haven’t found a way to say, “Bye” or “See ya” in Balinese.



In some languages “hello” and “goodbye” are accompanied by important gestures –putting the hands together, as in prayer, and bowing, with a different depth of the bow and position of the hands (at the heart, the chin, the mouth, the forehead) for different relationships. In Maori, there is a different greeting for one female, one male, two females, two males, a mixed group, etc. I decided it was enough to memorize just one way of greeting someone.

Sitting next to two girls learning American Sign Language in a café one day, I asked them to teach me my three phrases in ASL. When I learned that my Uber driver in Tacoma was from Samoa, I asked him to teach me how Samoans say, “Hello,” “What’s your name?” and “Goodbye.” I loved learning how to pronounce the click in Xhosa, a language of South Africa, and was disappointed that none of the words I learned had the “X” (click sound) in them, so I always pronounce the language name before saying the phrases, just so I can click.

On a certain page of *The Piano Tuner*, by Daniel Mason, a novel set in British Burma in the nineteenth century, the protagonist meets a woman to whom he says, “Minglaba. Shih nah meh be lou kor d’le?” And I could read it! He said, “Hello. What’s your name?” Even more fun was to meet a woman on a hike in the Applegate who was from Latvia. Imagine her surprise when I said, “Sveiki. Ka jus sauc?” When she repeated the words, I could see how badly I had pronounced them, but nonetheless, she had understood them on my tongue.

The last word I learned was Dapabachjennja” duh-buh-puh-CHEN ya), Belorussian for “goodbye,” with which I finished the task! Dapabachjennja!

By my birthday in July, I had finished all 75 tasks of 75 repetitions each. At my party I let guests choose one of my language flash cards and ask me to say “Hello,” “What is your name?” and “Goodbye” in that language.

I didn't miss a one.



Diana Coogle has lived in the mountains above the Applegate River for 45 years.



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THEATRE

GEOFF RIDDEN

I confess that I took a while to feel comfortable with the jokes, until I realized that these stereotypical targets are not to be the butts of the humor here, any more than Cambodians and Native Americans were in other plays earlier this season.

How To Catch New Theatre

The final two plays in the OSF 2019 season opened in July: *Indecent* and *How to Catch Creation*.

Indecent is the tenth play in the American Revolutions cycle to be staged at OSF: this is a production which maintains the high standards of its predecessors, and its two hours traffic on the stage is not to be missed.

Paula Vogel's play (directed by Shana Cooper) was co-commissioned with Yale Repertory Theatre, and had already been seen on Broadway before it arrived in Ashland, but its roots go back much further. The director of that Broadway production, Rebecca Taichman, had presented her own version of this story in 2000 as her graduate thesis at the Yale School of Drama. It's appropriate, then, that Vogel's version of the narrative at the Angus Bowmer Theatre includes a joke about the difficulty of a Jew gaining access to Yale: one of many instances of humor being used to leaven an essentially serious subject.

Among the targets for the jokes are the Yiddish language, Jewish culture and tradition (one whole song devoted to the cutting off of payots) and lesbianism (at one point conflating lesbians and thespians). I confess that I took a while to feel comfortable with the jokes, until I realized that these stereotypical targets are not to be the butts of the humor here, any more than Cambodians and Native Americans were in other plays earlier

this season. Remember that time when your teacher gave you permission to laugh at the word "x" (insert your word of choice) before getting down to a real discussion of race/gender/politics/religion? That is the tactic being deployed here. As one character, Leml, beautifully played by Benjamin Pelteson, explains "I am done being in a country that laughs at the way I speak".

The play concerns the circumstances surrounding Sholem Asch's 1906 play *God of Vengeance*, and follows that play from its conception and the skepticism of those who first heard it, through its initial success in Europe to its staging in New York and the legal proceedings taken when it was produced in 1923 in an English translation. Vogel's play does not end there, but I will reveal no more. Rebecca Taichman's original concept was of a courtroom drama, but this play has a much broader canvas, emphasising that the world at large was acceptant of and moved by a love story between two women, but that US culture could not accommodate it.

The production has a cast of seven actors and three musicians, playing multiple roles in a variety of languages, including Yiddish, German and English (and even Yiddish/English with a New Yoik accent!). It was a pleasure to see the return of Anthony Heald to OSF, in a troupe where the performances were all excellent, not least in the dances and songs

Continued on page 23

Indecent (2019) Shayna Blass, Rebecca S'Manga Frank.





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Theatre

Continued from page 21

which took us from one scene to the next: kudos to the musicians and to the cast as dancers - once again, we are redeemed by music. The surtitles, projected onto a screen, helped in translating languages or identifying which language was being used: the set and staging was otherwise spare. Simply put: this was a triumph!

How to Catch Creation came to OSF after productions earlier this year in Chicago, Philadelphia and Baltimore, and I recommend the online reviews of those productions as a taster of what is being staged at the Thomas Theatre. The play is directed by Nataki Garrett, the incoming Artistic Director at OSF, who was given a rousing round of applause as she took her seat on opening night.

This was an assured delivery by the director and her cast of an outstanding piece of writing for the theatre, and it bodes well for new work under Nataki Garrett's tenure. Like *Indecent*, this play has at its heart a thoughtful and sophisticated treatment of a serious topic, but there is also comedy aplenty. I was able to see the play twice early in its run, and was struck by the enthusiastic response to its jokes, especially in the first half—Christiana Clark, in particular, proved to be a favourite with the audiences. However, those audiences also paid close attention to the ways in which the intersecting plot lines develop and come together as this wonderful cast explores the very nature of creation and creativity: How does creation take place and

how is it inhibited? What makes 'a good man'? What makes 'a good mother' or 'a good father'?

The play takes its title from a poem written by one of its characters, a poem which proves to have a profound influence on another character; what seem to be three separate sets of relationships move inexorably together. This production made full use of the staging potential of the Thomas: the audience was on all four sides, and the floor of the set was divided into four discrete areas, with a fifth space in the center which could be raised and lowered: it reminded me of the set for *Like Water by the Spoonful* in 2014. This staging allowed for separate spaces for the residences of the three pairs of actors, as well as permitting scenes in a variety of other locations (offices, a studio, and a park among others). We even have glimpses of the Golden Gate Bridge! There is such a degree of interplay between the characters in this ingenious piece that there are times when the same lines are delivered simultaneously by different characters in different parts of the set.

I would not be a surprised to find that *How to Catch Creation* becomes the most-performed new play in the USA in 2019: this production does that play full justice.



Geoff Ridden has taught in universities in Africa, Europe and North America. Since moving to Ashland in 2008, he has become a familiar figure on radio, in the theatre, in the lecture hall and on the concert stage. He is artistic director of the Classic Readings Theatre Company and has a particular interest in adaptations of the plays of Shakespeare. Email geoff.ridden@gmail.com



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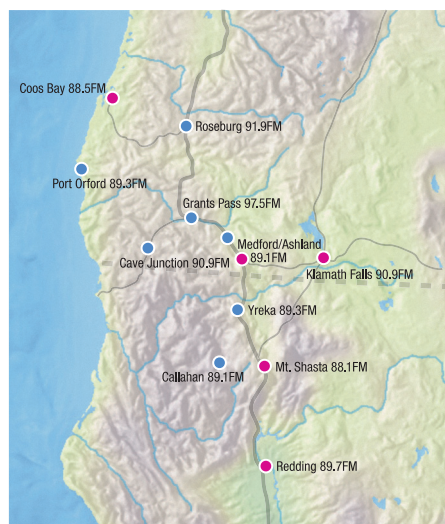
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3:00am World Café

Saturday

5:00am Weekend Edition
9:00am Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!
10:00am Ask Me Another
11:00am Radiolab
12:00pm E-Town
1:00pm Mountain Stage
3:00pm Live From Here with Chris Thile
5:00pm All Things Considered

6:00pm American Rhythm
8:00pm Q the Music / 99% Invisible
9:00pm The Retro Lounge
10:00pm Late Night Blues
12:00am Undercurrents

Sunday

5:00am Weekend Edition
9:00am TED Radio Hour
10:00am This American Life
11:00am The Moth Radio Hour
12:00pm Jazz Sunday
2:00pm American Routes
4:00pm Sound Opinions
5:00pm All Things Considered
6:00pm The Folk Show
9:00pm Live From Here with Chris Thile
11:00pm Mountain Stage
1:00am Undercurrents

Stations

KSMF 89.1 FM
ASHLAND

KSBA 88.5 FM
COOS BAY

KSKF 90.9 FM
KLAMATH FALLS

KNCA 89.7 FM
BURNLEY/REDDING

KNSQ 88.1 FM
MT. SHASTA

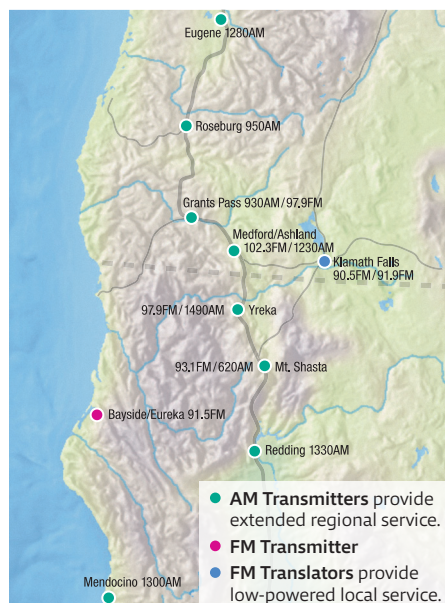
KVYA 91.5 FM
CEDARVILLE/
SURPRISE VALLEY

Translators

Callahan/Ft Jones 89.1 FM
Cave Junction 90.9 FM

Grants Pass 97.5 FM
Port Orford 89.3 FM
Roseburg 91.9 FM
Yreka 89.3 FM

News & Information Service



Monday through Friday

5:00am BBC World Service
7:00am 1A
8:00am The Jefferson Exchange
10:00am The Takeaway
11:00am Here & Now
1:00pm BBC News Hour
1:30pm The Daily
2:00pm 1A
3:00pm Fresh Air
4:00pm PRI's The World
5:00pm On Point
7:00pm Fresh Air (repeat)
8:00pm The Jefferson Exchange
(repeat of 8am broadcast)
10:00pm BBC World Service

Saturday

5:00am BBC World Service
7:00am WorldLink
8:00am Day 6
9:00am Freakonomics Radio
10:00am Planet Money
11:00am Hidden Brain
12:00pm Living on Earth
1:00pm Science Friday
3:00pm To the Best of Our Knowledge
5:00pm Politics with Amy Walter
6:00pm Selected Shorts
7:00pm BBC World Service

Sunday

5:00am BBC World Service
7:00am Inside Europe
8:00am On The Media
9:00am Innovation Hub
10:00am Reveal
11:00am This American Life
12:00pm TED Radio Hour
1:00pm Political Junkie
2:00pm Fresh Air Weekend
3:00pm Milk Street Radio
4:00pm Travel with Rick Steves
5:00pm To the Best of Our Knowledge
7:00pm BBC World Service

Translators

Klamath Falls 90.5 FM /91.9 FM
Yreka 97.9 FM

Ashland/Medford 102.3 FM
Grants Pass 97.9 FM
Mt. Shasta 93.1 FM

Stations

KSJK AM 1230
TALENT

KAGI AM 930
GRANTS PASS

KTBR AM 950
ROSEBURG

KRVM AM 1280
EUGENE

KSYC AM 1490
YREKA

KMJC AM 620
MT. SHASTA

KPMO AM 1300
MENDOCINO

KNHM 91.5 FM
BAYSIDE/EUREKA

KJPR AM 1330
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Self-caricature of Caruso making a record.



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The Sound Of The Times

I hear a resonance, an echo of our time, in a record from 100 years ago. Is that backwards? Shouldn't the past reverberate in the present? Hidden inside the grooves of that shellac Gramophone is a tangle of history, caught up in fossilized tone like a mosquito in amber. I take it that you and I are in THIS time, the tense present of a ripe 2019. Allow me to take you back to then, or to the *now* that I hear carved into *then*.

September 8, 1919- The world and its trouble tremble beneath the cutting needle as Enrico Caruso sings and records his latest hit-to-be: *A Vucchella*, a Neapolitan-dialect ditty by Francesco Paolo Tosti (1846-1916) with lyrics by Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938). The year has been rich and turbulent in America: WWI ending, prohibition beginning, the 19th amendment (women's suffrage), post-war unemployment and labor unrest with strikes in coal, steel and other industrial essentials, anarchist bombings, jailing and deportation of communists and socialists and "undesirable citizens", red-scare reaction to the perceived threat of ascendant Russian Bolshevik influence, deadly race riots and the "red summer" killings of hundreds of black Americans, the Florida Keys Tornado. Not to mention the trouble on the Mexican border in 1919 as Pancho Villa attempted to take over Ciudad Juarez; this provoked intervention by the US Army to protect nearby El Paso. Is this our time? At least the flu epidemic was over.

Tosti passed away back in 1916. He was active for decades as a song-composer and singing teacher, his pockets bursting with recommendations and letters of introduction from Verdi, Mascagni and Puccini, beloved by song-lovers and the royal patrons who were his friends, admirers and vocal students. D'Annunzio was a broadminded and experimental poet who was prolific and skilled in many styles and forms, also writing journalism, drama and critique. In 1919, he was even the founder of a short-lived utopian City-State, declaring himself *Il Duce* and amazingly able to turn that rebellious start into a late career as an Italian statesman. Enrico Caruso has already conquered the world, salon by drawing room, phonograph by phonograph with his recordings on wax cylinders and shellac 78s. His voice is so precious and the technology so delicate and costly that some best-selling recordings are issued with him coughing, or with the pianist botching the introduction. He began in 1902 with EMI/HMV's forerunner, then sang for Zonophone and Pathé before settling into an exclusive deal with Victor Talking Machine Company in 1905, for whom he would record in the United States until his final session in 1920. That morning-glory shaped horn caught Caruso's Neapolitan sunshine particularly well, his warm and robust vocal tone balancing the tinny,

nasal native sound of the acoustical recording process. Other singers, tenors and sopranos especially, sound brittle, thin and irritatingly unreal in playback. But not Caruso.

Or I should say OUR Caruso, as he was practically American in his 16th season as the leading tenor of the Metropolitan Opera. His on-stage performances were cherished as people heard his records and came to see and hear more than a two-minute side could hold. So began the relationship between performance stardom and record-industry stardom. And he is a star-his records were the first to break a million copies sold. Another first was his 1904 recording of a made-for-gramophone song, with the composer Ruggiero Leoncavallo at the piano, in *Mattinata*. His first silent film *My Cousin*, a Paramount flop of 1918, portrays him pantomiming in full costume the heartbreaking verismo soliloquy *Vesti la giubba* ("put on the make-up") from Leoncavallo's opera *Pagliacci*. Leoncavallo died in August of 1919, a month before Caruso's voice, with all its triumph and grief, is caught in the shellac of *A Vucchella*.

Since 1916 he had expand into heavier, more dramatic roles as his already dark-toned tenor became mightier still, yet his recording of *A Vucchella* is mostly light and joyful. There's a sense of chiaroscuro in his tone, by turns brightly lyrical then darkly heroic. High and low play through the song, with some moments sounding like folk-pastiche, other moments sounding like the crux of a grand opera. That's the historical moment, too. The old monarchic world order has fallen, and the 20th century, with its new nationalisms, is still in its painful adolescence.

A Vucchella is a moment for composer, poet, singer and listener to meet in the contradictions of life and love. One word from the song catches it all: *apassuliatella*, an invented Neapolitan term-of-endearment translating to something like "withered pretty little thing". Post-war classical music, maybe even the grand operatic tradition could be described that way back in 1919, and in Caruso's voice, all that finds authoritative expression. His flirtatious Neapolitan swagger is the real thing, as is his tragedian's pedigree. He is everyman's tenor *and* the gold standard in high art at once, and his singing is ours. Has there ever been a moment as high and low as this? Let's see what our roaring 20's will bring.



Cody Grove is a performing musician, teacher, and storyteller working on social renewal through art and imagination. Born in California, he studied music at Musikseminar in Hamburg, and at McGill University in Montreal before settling in Ashland. In addition to music and public radio, he enjoys gardening, hiking and folklore studies.

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What I Never Learned In College: Reflections On A Journalism Internship

Of all the things I've learned working on the news team at Jefferson Public Radio, it's that they really don't teach you this stuff in college. Public radio is a vital resource; few places in the media landscape offer news funded by the people, for the people. It's no wonder public radio is one of the most trusted news sources in the country. With an abundance of fake news and the ability to quickly disseminate false information on social media, people want to know that they can trust a news organization.

Being a reporter for public radio is a very different role than reporting for a TV station or a newspaper. In public radio we're often covering a much larger area than a newspaper or a TV station, generally with a much smaller budget. In the Rogue Valley, it's a lot more noticeable. JPR is in an interesting position in that we cover large portions of two states fairly equally. JPR earned its name because we cover the entire region of what has been referred to as *The State of Jefferson*. Covering this large area poses a unique challenge for us as reporters. It can mean much more driving and it also means sifting through twice as much information to find stories that cover both states. This offers a unique perspective for this station. I've learned that there are different ways to cover both states; each state has its own political climate, unique cultures and values. Covering both states means taking those into account.

I've also learned about the immense amount they don't teach you in college. Getting used to writing academically for the past 16 years means that going into the 'real-world', one has to learn to write for the people again. Now I understand people's complaints about the "ivory tower". While I'm not harping on my old professors, sometimes you can get caught up in the world of academia and forget that all those students need to learn how to get a job outside of college. I've had to unlearn old habits of writing that have been ingrained in me. Learning what can be done at the college level to better prepare the next generation of journalists is very important. Providing real world opportunities for these students to practice their skills is also very important. I was a part of a group of media outlets at my university in which I wrote for a lifestyle magazine, directed TV shows, and managed a college radio station. While those experiences were great, and shaped me into who I want to be, they don't compare to an internship at a public radio station like Jefferson Public Radio. Learning the skills of what it's like at a professional station prepares you more than any amount of time at a student newspaper or magazine.

I've had so many experiences at JPR that have helped to prepare me for the real world. One of my favorite stories to work on was a story about the Pacific Rim Bowl, featuring the biennial football competition between the Ashland High School Grizzlies and the Japanese All Stars, a team that flew all the way from Japan to compete. The competition is in its 31st year and it was a pleasure getting to talk with the coaches and players about their experiences in the program. I was able to put together a radio piece that I'm very proud of and learn all about the world of radio news production.

Recently, I spoke with the head of marketing at a public radio station who told me that often the thing he notices that schools do is teach students everything about the tools, such as learning the Adobe creative suite used for audio editing, but not so much about the concepts or the actual practice. He said that often the people who get hired aren't those who took classes to learn Photoshop, it's the people that learned the vital skills needed to survive in the organization. The same applies to the field of journalism. You can't learn how to write better in a few weeks of training, it's something you learn over a long, painful period; it takes a lot of practice.

Interviewing a source is another skill that takes a lot of practice. That's why the internship I applied for looked more at the soft skills the applicants learned rather than hard skills like knowing how to edit audio or use a recorder. It's much easier to teach someone how to use a microphone than it is how to write a news story.

This internship has helped me learn so much about the world of journalism and public radio. I believe that opportunities like this are the best way to prepare the next generation. Offering valuable opportunities for people to gain real world experience in a newsroom will help teach us the skills we never learned in college.



Roman Battaglia interned at JPR as part of the Charles Snowden Program for Excellence in Journalism. He's a recent graduate of Oregon State University and enjoys all things public radio.

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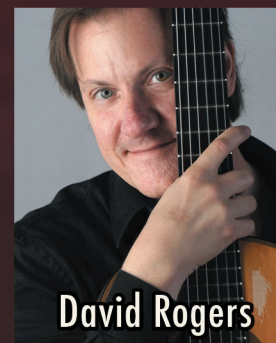
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Down To Earth

Continued from page 17

"Our amount of microplastic is increasing as we move downstream," said Granek, the scientist who helped us make sense of our results. "We do see that—a fairly strong correlation between population in the vicinity and microplastic numbers."

We found the most plastic by far in the samples from the Willamette River in Portland, in a spot where close to a million people live within 10 miles of its banks.

To get a rough idea of how much microplastic is flowing through the city, we multiplied our results by the total volume of water in the river. We estimate there were more than 600 microplastics floating down the Willamette every second on the day we collected our water samples.

"That's pretty astonishing when you look at that," said Travis Williams with the environmental group Willamette Riverkeeper. "Just the per second number is pretty crazy."

More than 600 particles per second adds up to more than 57 million nearly invisible bits of plastic floating through the city over the course of the day.

On the Columbia River at St. Helens, the microfiber flow was more than 50 million. More than 2 million microfibers passed that day in the Willamette River at Albany.

Even high up in the Rogue River watershed, in a spot where nobody lives for miles, our results suggested more than 22,000 microplastic particles flowed by on the day we tested.

Williams says microplastic could easily be hurting wildlife—like the freshwater mussels, a species his group has worked hard to protect. The mussels spend their entire lives filtering food from the bottom of the river.

"There's some potential that there's plastic in the food web in the river, whether that is small organisms or fish that people fish out of the river or salmon coming upstream," Granek said.

Scientists are finding these microplastics everywhere – including some rivers at much higher levels than we found in Oregon. Granek says they're in our air and our drinking water—and that's not all.

"They're in beer. They're in fish. They're in shellfish. So, unfortunately, it's perhaps not surprising to find them in our rivers, even in areas that we would consider more pristine."



Jes Burns is the Southern Oregon reporter for Oregon Public Broadcasting's Science and Environment unit. She's based at Jefferson Public Radio and works collaboratively with JPR's newsroom to create original journalism that helps citizens examine how environmental issues unfolding in their own backyards intersect with national issues. Her work can be heard and seen on public radio and television stations throughout the Pacific Northwest.



Cassandra Profita is a reporter for EarthFix, an environmental journalism collaboration led by OPB in partnership with six other public media stations in Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

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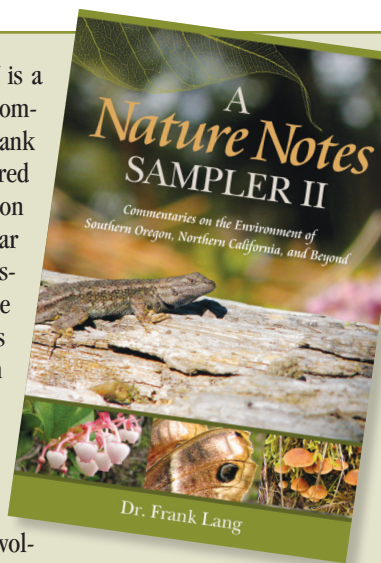
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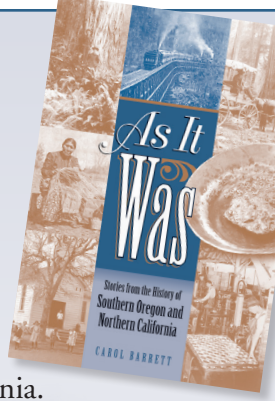
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DON KAHLE

Outrage Is Not Easily Contained

I don't attend many parties. It's just not my idea of a good time, watching people vie for attention, competing with one another. I left two get-togethers over the past few weeks early—each for the same reason. That reason is not unrelated to recent headlines about gun rampages. It's also relevant to the latest controversy on campus.

At the first party, people were chitchatting about innocuous topics, doing no harm to anyone. The conversation somehow landed on airline mishap stories, with each person telling a more harrowing tale than the last. It became weirdly reminiscent of scouts telling spooky stories around a campfire.

Sharing little frights can be a pleasant way to pass the time. But it didn't stop there. Which airports are the least convenient? Which airlines have the worst policies? What's the worst excuse you've received from customer service?

I felt bad for those poor employees, who became the characters in the stories we were swapping. They weren't at the party to defend themselves or to fill in details that might have made each story less absurd. They were straw men, buttressing our judgments.

That wasn't a fun discussion for me, so I exited early. Less than a week later, something similar happened. This time the

Shared outrage gets everyone's attention, and who doesn't like that? But who among us will step in its path to slow its spreading destruction?

company person, a Starbucks barista, was cast as a hero. A rude customer played the villain. He was asking for a free cup of ice on a very hot day.

The young employee told the man that she wasn't allowed to fill his outside cup with ice. He became angry. "I understand that it's the rule," he bellowed at the teenage girl, "but it's a bad rule!" He continued berating the poor employee, with my friend watching as the next person in line.

Unable to persuade the employee to violate store policy, the non-customer raised the rhetorical stakes. Slavery was a "bad rule" that he certainly wouldn't have followed. (He was white. She was not.) Equating a cup of ice with owning another human being blew things out of proportion in a hurry, but it also did something else.

Everyone at the party leaned in, hanging on every word. "Can you believe this?" "What happened next?" "I hope you left that poor girl an extra tip!"

I watched how outrage brought people together more powerfully than anything else. It worried me. Outrage is rage aimed at outsiders. Both halves of that formula are dangerous. We don't usually have the tools or the courage to stop what we've started.

Shared outrage gets everyone's attention, and who doesn't like that? But who among us will step in its path to slow its spreading destruction? I left the parties early, but that was hardly a profile of courage. We must learn to identify a straw man before setting it aflame, whether it's invading immigrants, a heritage statue, or a cup of ice.

Outrage at somebody who isn't named or known will draw rapt attention. But rage spreads in ways we cannot predict or control. The same force that quickly brings us together can just as quickly blow us apart.



Don Kahle (fridays@dksez.com) writes a column each Friday for *The Register-Guard* and blogs at www.dksez.com.

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Bringing Together Young And Old To Ease The Isolation Of Rural Life

Prisilla Bogema lives in a rural town called McGregor, Minn., in a part of the state that has more trees and lakes than people.

She came here about 20 years ago seeking solitude during a major crisis in her life. She had just gotten divorced and was dealing with some health problems. “So I came to a place where nobody could see me,” she says.

Now Bogema is in her 60s, frail and mostly confined to her house. Her arthritis and other health problems have limited her mobility. She struggles with the upkeep of her home and yard. She drives into town once a week for groceries and a movie with other seniors. But she doesn’t have close friends she sees regularly, and her children and grandchildren visit only once every few months.

The solitude she once sought is no longer as comforting. “It can get lonely, very lonely,” she says.

According to a recent poll by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Bogema is one of about 2.5 million rural residents (about 7% of the total rural population) who say they have no friends or family nearby to rely on. An additional 14 million (about 39%) say they have only a few people. Like Bogema, many feel isolated.

People in rural areas report “feeling lonely or left out,” says Carrie Henning-Smith, the deputy director of the University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center and one of the authors of a recent study on rural isolation, despite the fact that rural communities often have stronger social networks than urban ones. She notes that many communities have become more socially isolated in recent years as rural economies have declined and young people moved away.

Social isolation is increasingly recognized as a public health issue. Studies show that isolation and loneliness put people at a higher risk of long-term physical and mental health problems, including premature mortality. And Henning-Smith’s preliminary research suggests that in rural areas, isolation can reduce people’s ability to meet daily needs, such as access to health care and food.

A group in northeastern Minnesota is tackling this problem in a novel way: They’re trying to reconnect a fragmented social fabric by bringing together generations to support each other — kids and the elderly.

McGregor is one of 18 rural communities running the program called *AGE to age*. It connects more than 4,000 youths with almost 2,500 older adults annually.



Nearly 20 years ago, Priscilla Bogema moved to McGregor, Minn., a rural town about an hour outside Duluth.

The initiative is not just geared to help the elderly — the support runs both ways. It also helps children and young people in these communities feel more supported, giving them work experience and mentors. Children and seniors work on projects together; the kind of activity varies from community to community and can range anywhere from participating in a reading club, to building and maintaining a community garden, to helping local food pantries, to working on art projects. Along the way, they develop meaningful relationships that can last beyond the program.

Cheryl Meld is the director of Kids Plus, a local McGregor group that runs the AGE to age program in this community. She hopes it can help give the town a different future. “I would like to see a more connected community, and one that sustains those connections,” she says.

The initiative is “truly unique,” says Carter Florence, senior director of strategy at Meals on Wheels America, who grew up in rural Appalachia, in Hazard, Ky., and has spent much of her career working in rural areas. Many places around the country, she says, “are trying to support community connections and grow the close-knitedness of their communities,” she says. But most of these efforts are small-scale, she adds.

“Having such a big program covering such a wide area, that is really intentionally focused on the intergenerational connectedness, is unique,” agrees Henning-Smith.

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A once-bustling town empties out

Social isolation and loneliness weren't always a problem in McGregor and neighboring towns, says Meld, who grew up in the next town over, Tamarac. These were once thriving, connected communities, she says.

"There were large families," she says. "There were a lot of people doing things together and a real sense of neighbors and neighborhoods."

McGregor once had a bustling downtown, full of stores, bars and restaurants. People shopped and socialized there, running into each other and stopping by each other's homes, Meld remembers. But that started to change a couple of decades ago, she says, when the local economy began to decline.

Stores like Walmart and Costco arrived, pushing out local businesses. Minnesota's timber industry, a big source of employment, began to struggle. And family farms did, too, as the farms became less profitable and young people moved away looking for other careers.

"So we lost the sense of generational businesses and families living here," says Meld.

Today, downtown McGregor is eerily quiet, with only a handful of businesses, such as a car repair shop, a bowling alley, a health center, a church and a funeral home.

"People don't just get together or drop by for a visit [anymore]," Meld says. "You don't see kids playing pickup games; you don't see them get together to play a game of softball."

The recent poll by NPR, Harvard and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation found that low income contributes to isolation. The poll found a higher proportion – about 3 in 10 – of rural adults in households earning less than \$25,000 a year say they always or often feel lonely and isolated from others, compared with those who earn more money. Previously published studies show that poverty is associated with a greater experience of social isolation.

The economic decline has affected the well-being of the entire community, Meld says. Older adults are increasingly aging in isolation. And young and middle-aged people are having to work harder to make ends meet.

Poverty and social isolation have contributed to rising addiction rates in the community, Meld says.

All this has led to children growing up in difficult family circumstances, with hardly any opportunities to escape their realities.

"If you talk with kids, they'll tell you their parents are separated or divorced or going through some kind of substance [abuse] issue, and that's commonplace," Meld says. "The reality of their life is a lot of disruption, a lot of sadness, a lot of kids filling adult roles in their families' lives, helping raise their siblings."

Supporting vulnerable children

AGE to age program leaders in each community make an effort to engage the most vulnerable kids, says Lynn Haglin, director at the Northland Foundation, a Minnesota foundation that started the AGE to age program and funds it.

Without help, many kids – "children in the shadows," as she calls them – end up struggling on their own, Haglin says. These are "young people that kind of move through school very quietly and they just don't have those moments where they are made to feel like, 'Wow you are really something; you really have a lot to offer,'" says Haglin.

Annastazia Vierkandt, now 20 years old, mostly grew up in McGregor. She says the Kids Plus AGE to age program was a lifeline for her.

When she was a kid, she and her family rarely saw their neighbors or friends. She had three siblings and three half-siblings, but they were on their own a lot.

"Being the oldest sister, I was just expected to take care of the kids," she says. "My mom wouldn't go out and play with them or anything like that. Sometimes, we'd just be inside playing, and she'd be inside in her room, or sitting on her phone."

Her father lived in another town, and her stepfather worked long hours. Vierkandt spent much of her childhood feeling alone.

Studies show that social isolation puts people at risk of a range of physical and mental health problems. And by the time Vierkandt was about 12 years old, she began to struggle with anxiety and depression.

Then, in seventh grade, she signed up to work with Kids Plus and met Barbara Coplan, who remembers when they first met.

"A very bubbly, happy girl, but she would be stressed and inward," says Coplan, who is now 70. "And she needed some encouragement to be Anna, because Anna's a really cool person!"

The two of them would meet up after school and head out into the community to work on various projects – helping out at community meals, a soup kitchen, a bake sale, a flower sale.

"Anything that they did, I was usually there, because I didn't want to be at home," Vierkandt says.

As she got to know Coplan better, Vierkandt started to open up to her about her home life, Coplan recalls. And Vierkandt was also anxious about a lot of things and afraid to talk to people.

Coplan, who has worked with more than 50 children through the program over the years, realized that Vierkandt didn't have much support from the adults in her life. "It's hard for the kids to fight when they feel like they don't have the support they need," she says.

So she began to give Vierkandt lots of encouragement to come out of her shell.

She says she would say to her: "Hey, you're a great person! You talk to people, and communicate with them like you want. You're loving, you understand things. And if they don't want to talk to you, what's the worst that can happen? They'll say get away from me, OK!"

Coplan was a positive role model, says Vierkandt. "If I got frustrated or didn't understand how to do something, she was very patient and able to explain it in a way that would help me understand," she says.

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Turns out, it's really hard for companies to ensure that none of their raw materials came from recently cleared land.

Don't Cut Those Trees — Big Food Might Be Watching

Brazilian scientists are reporting a sharp increase this year in the clearing of forests in the Amazon. That's bad news for endangered ecosystems, as well as the world's climate. Deforestation releases large amounts of heat-trapping carbon dioxide.

It's also a setback for big food companies that have pledged to preserve those forests—or at least to boycott suppliers that clear forests in order to raise crops or graze cattle. “Traders such as Cargill, Bunge, or Louis Dreyfus; consumer good manufacturers such as Mondelēz or Procter & Gamble or Unilever; retailers such as Walmart and McDonald's—all the major brands have made those commitments,” says Luiz Amaral, director of global solutions for commodities and finance at the World Resources Institute.

Most of the companies promised to cut all links to deforestation by 2020, but few are likely to make that deadline. Turns out, it's really hard for companies to ensure that none of their raw materials came from recently cleared land.

So Amaral and his colleagues just created a new online tool for companies to use. They call it Global Forest Watch Pro.

Amaral works in Brazil. I'm in Washington, D.C. But with the magic of computer screen-sharing, he can show me exactly how it works.

Amaral pulls up an image of the globe. This particular image shows which areas are covered by trees. Amaral calls it “the Google Maps of forests.”

This map is created from data collected by satellites operated by NASA. One satellite scans the entire planet every week, constantly updating this map. So it's possible to tell whether trees disappear from one week to the next. Another satellite monitors the entire globe for fires.

Researchers at the University of Maryland created software to filter this flood of data and detect the signals of deforestation. “The key innovation here is that the computer is doing all that work for us, constantly looking at those images as they're being taken, to identify if something changed in the tree cover; if there is a fire in that area,” Amaral says.

Then Amaral shows me how to use this tool to monitor specific farms. “I uploaded 22 cattle farms in Brazil,” he says. These farms show up as highlighted areas in one region of Brazil.

These are real farms. Amaral got their information from a public database of land ownership in Brazil. With a few mouse clicks, we see how much of each farm is covered with trees and how that area has changed.

Continued on page 38



This year scientists have reported a sharp increase in deforestation in the Amazon as ranchers raise crops and graze cattle in cleared areas.

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The Salt

Continued from page 37

He points out one 40,000-acre-farm. Half of it is covered in forests. But we can also see that, 15 years ago, the whole thing was forest. We zoom in closer. We can see exactly where trees disappeared in this part of Brazil.

"So you can see here that almost all the tree cover loss within this region actually happened within this specific farm here," he says.

The boundary of this farm, in fact, lines up almost exactly with the area of deforestation. It looks like intentional forest-clearing, not a wildfire.

"That would be exactly my assumption," Amaral says.

In a similar way, a food company can enter the locations of farms from which it buys raw materials. Global Forest Watch Pro then will send an alert whenever it detects deforestation within that area.

The company Mondelēz International, which makes Oreo cookies and Triscuit crackers, already is using it. "I think it's actually extremely important," says Jonathan Horrell, the company's director of global sustainability. "The tool enables you to understand what's actually happening in real time."

Mondelēz has pledged to cut its greenhouse emissions. But when it did an audit of those emissions, it realized that fuel-burning factories and trucks were not the biggest part of its carbon footprint. "It's actually the carbon emissions that are linked to deforestation—forests being cut down in order to produce raw materials that we use in our products," he says.

Those raw materials include palm oil from plantations in Indonesia, and cocoa farms in West Africa.

Companies that want to use Global Forest Watch Pro have to figure out exactly where their suppliers are, and that can be difficult.

Mondelēz is doing this with cocoa farms. "As of the end of 2018, we'd mapped 90,000 farms in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, which are the most important sources of cocoa in our supply chain," he says. Mondelēz and other companies also monitor land that's close to mills where they buy palm oil.

This is easier to do when companies buy food directly from local producers, as is often the case with cocoa and palm oil. In other cases, though, products move through a long chain of intermediary companies. Farmers who raise cattle may sell them to a local slaughterhouse, not directly to McDonald's.

Yet Luiz Amaral, from the World Resources Institute, says even local slaughterhouses can use this new online tool. The beauty of this tool, he says, is that it's so cheap and easy to use. In fact, WRI has persuaded one slaughterhouse in Paraguay to sign up for an account.



Dan Charles is
NPR's food and
agriculture
correspondent.

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Tours often begin in the kitchen, where everything was ordered from a catalog and was affordable.

Charles And Ray Eames Made Life Better By Design; Their Home Was No Exception

In 1949, Charles and Ray Eames designed and built their home on a bluff overlooking the ocean in the Pacific Palisades. Features of their house and studio are now ubiquitous, but 70 years ago, they were revolutionary.

Charles was an architect; his wife, Ray, a painter. From their Los Angeles studio, they designed molded plywood office and lounge chairs that are now considered classics. The couple devised toys and made innovative films about math and computers for clients such as IBM and Boeing.

Their home has long been a mecca for artists, students and design enthusiasts. Now, their heirs are working to preserve the house for generations to come.

The house was built with off-the-shelf, prefabricated materials. Steel beams, painted black, frame panels of glass walls and doors. It seems composed like a Mondrian painting: a block of cobalt blue here, a bright red-orange insert there.

"Ray and I worked on it, we designed it together, of course," Charles Eames explained to TV host Arlene Francis in 1956, on her show *Home*. "It's composed of standard factory units."

It was known as "Case Study House No. 8" for a program that challenged architects to design modern, inexpensive residences in postwar Southern California. It's now a National Historic Landmark, and the Getty Conservation Institute has been helping plan for its future. Having preserved tombs in Egypt and architectural ruins in China and Latin America, the institute has turned to conserving modern architecture. Susan Macdonald, the GCI's head of buildings and sites, says the project proves the institute can treat modern buildings the same way it treats buildings from the ancient world.

So far, for the Eames house, that has meant repairing the flat roof, replacing the asbestos floor tiles and installing a device to measure air particulates. The house remains open to reservations-only visitors, who must enter without shoes.

Tours often begin in the kitchen, where everything was ordered from a catalog and was affordable. The Eameses added their flair, painting an exposed pipe red, installing sliding glass doors and creating artful assemblages.

"You'll see very common things like shells and little tiny objects," points out docent Jennifer Polito. "Together they're beautiful. The candlesticks were important—they had breakfast by candlelight."

A spiral staircase leads upstairs to two bedrooms with movable walls. The 17-foot-tall living room is light and airy. Glass doors open to a meadow, connecting indoors and outdoors. The



JULIUS SHULMAN/PAUL GETTY TRUST

Creators of designs that still inspire us today, Ray and Charles Eames were two of the most influential designers of the 20th Century. The Eames House, built in 1949 in the Pacific Palisades, is considered one of the most important postwar residences in the U.S. The National Historic Landmark celebrates its 70th anniversary this year with a new conservation plan.

space is accented by exposed trusses, as well as layered rugs and cozy low-slung couches. And everywhere: fabrics, toys, folk art, books and souvenirs from their travels.

"This is not your sterile, minimalist, unhappy hipsters' home," says *Los Angeles Times* staff writer Carolina Miranda, who covers art and architecture. "This is a home that is lived in by two people who've been all over the world and are sharing some of what they've harvested in those adventures in their home."

Miranda admires the 1,500-square-foot house, nestled into the hillside. It stands in stark contrast to other houses in the neighborhood.

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Architecture

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“It’s so thoughtful and considered in terms of its design and its placement on the land,” she says. “And then we walk up the hill and we’re looking at McMansion construction, essentially. Totally unsympathetic. All they want are big bathrooms and a giant rumpus room. And the ocean view.”

You can glimpse the Pacific from inside the Eames House, too. But unlike its supersize neighbors, it sits far back from the cliff’s edge, in a meadow dotted with eucalyptus trees. Ray Eames once told a TV interviewer that they decided to orient the house this way after having lived in the meadow waiting for the house to be built. “We spent all our spare time here,” she said. “[I] began to think it would be criminal to put the house in the middle of the field.”

The Eameses’ granddaughter, Lucia Dewey Atwood, remembers picnicking in that meadow with her grandparents — she visited them often. They lived in harmony with nature, she says. From here, you hear the sounds of birds, tree leaves rustling and, on quiet nights, the ocean waves crashing in the distance.

Atwood says her grandparents were always creative, wondrous hosts. “One time I arrived, and Charles handed me a camera, and we spent the entire morning out in the meadow shooting images of daffodils,” she remembers. It turned out he was working on a project for the then-upcoming Polaroid camera, the SX-70.

Decades later, Atwood worked with her grandmother in the studio and lived in the house. She is now on the board of the Eames Foundation, whose goal, she says, is to show the way in which Charles and Ray lived.

“That does mean opening doors and windows; it means pulling curtains. It means having fresh bouquets in the house and having even a living tree in the house,” she explains. Atwood admits this poses conservation challenges, but her family doesn’t want the house to be a hermetically sealed museum.

She says the 250-year conservation plan she is directing takes into account the life span of the eucalyptus trees. And it incorporates her grandparents’ modernist values: a respect for materials, the iterative process of editing, and the ability to see “failure” as an opportunity to learn and to experiment. Also, taking pleasure seriously.

“It’s so amazing — if you’re working on an important project, you sort of make it be fun,” she says. “The ideas are just so much more fantastic. I mean, Charles and Ray really had this wonderful ability to invite you into the fun.”

And that was the point, according to the Eameses: to make life better by design.

This story was edited by Nina Gregory.

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The future of Oregon was forever changed by the completion of this line, and the men who built it (unlike the men who financed it) have been largely lost to history.

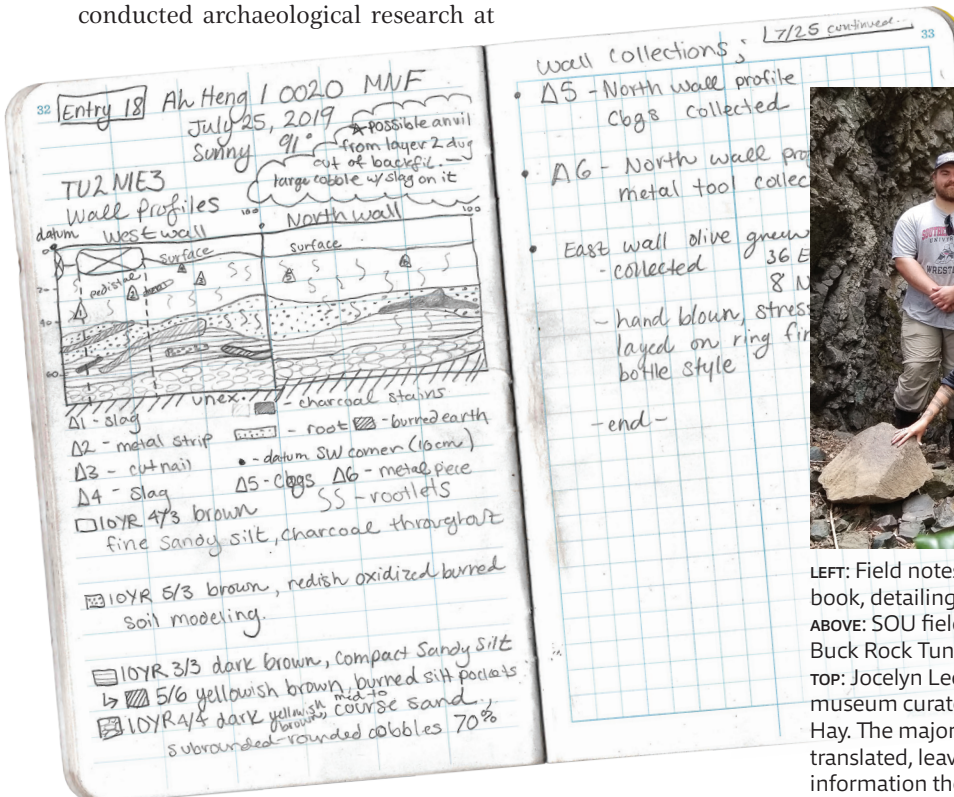
Field Notes: Southern Oregon University Laboratory Of Anthropology

Field school is a rite of passage for all archaeologists. It is where we learn how to use a compass, discover the hypotenuse of a 1x1-meter excavation unit, start honing our trowel skills, and begin working on the self-discipline needed to take detailed notes in our trusty Rite In The Rain (waterproof) yellow books. But field school offers more than just the building blocks of professional skills, it is also where the determination and drive of the would-be archaeologist gets tested. After seemingly endless days of mosquito bites, dust, grime, blisters and camp life—often punctuated with the added excitement of heatwaves, thunderstorms, or flat tires—the students emerge on the other end with a renewed determination for the field, or the desire to run far away the next time they see a shaker screen or a flat-tipped shovel.

On our July edition of *Underground History* during the *Jefferson Exchange*, Don Hann (of the Malheur National Forest) and I called in “live from the field” on the last day of our 2019 Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA) summer field school. Over the month of July we conducted archaeological research at

three sites across the state: we partnered with the Medford district Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to investigate a site associated with Chinese railroad workers in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, with Oregon State Parks to investigate the historic John Day Chinatown within the Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site, and with the Malheur National Forest to investigate two areas within the Ah Heng Mining site in the Blue Mountains. This field school was part of the larger Oregon Chinese Diaspora Project, which is a multi-agency collaboration that focuses on the research and education on Oregon’s early Chinese residents. As such, the field school was paired with a weekly lecture series (sponsored in part by the Oregon Historical Society), and a Passport in Time (PIT) project hosted by the Malheur National Forest, the Friends of the Cascade-

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LEFT: Field notes in field school student Melanie Douville’s yellow book, detailing the excavation at the Chinese blacksmith site. **ABOVE:** SOU field school group photo in front of the west portal of the Buck Rock Tunnel site in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. **TOP:** Jocelyn Lee and Don Merritt, Kam Wah Chung and Company museum curator, look through items written by herbalist Ing “Doc” Hay. The majority of the Chinese language documents have not been translated, leaving historians and archaeologists eager to see what information they may contain.

Underground History

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Historian Chuimei Ho and Jocelyn Lee, field school crew chief and graduate student at UMass Boston, look through documents in the Kam Wah Chung and Company museum archives. The museum has hundreds of letters, receipts, and other documents associated with the Chinese business and herbal apothecary.

Siskiyou National Monument helped us organize a guided history hike, the Friends of the Kam Wah Chung helped sponsor the field school and organize a public day during the excavations, and colleagues from the National Park Service, University of Oregon, Stanford University and more came out to join in on the fun. These efforts allowed us to engage with hundreds of interested individuals and share our findings during the course of the project.

Although I made the students hike two miles up hill each morning to one site and drive 1.5 hours each way to another (remember, this is supposed to test the mettle of the budding archaeologist), frustrations with the journey were tempered by the thrills of what we were finding. At each site the students helped to make important discoveries that are reshaping the way in which we understand the history of the early immigrant experience in Oregon. We located tent pads where weary workers would rest their tired bodies after a day of clearing, grading, and blasting the promised route of the coming Oregon and California Railroad. The future of Oregon was forever changed by the completion of this line, and the men who built it (unlike the men who financed it) have been largely lost to history. The broken dishes, empty cans, and discarded tools can help us piece together part of their story, highlighting aspects of daily life and the conditions under which they lived.

To the north in Grant County we found the buried remnants of the John Day Chinatown—the once thriving community that emerged after the discovery of gold in 1862 and lasted into the 20th century. Today all that remains is the incredibly well-



ABOVE LEFT: SOU field school students clear the area where a Chinese blacksmith worked at the Ah Heng mining company site in the Malheur National Forest. (**FROM LEFT:** Lachlan Miller, Melanie Douville, Ellen Durkee, and Heather Mogan.) **ABOVE RIGHT:** Field school student Melanie Douville is excavating within the area believed to have been where Chinese railroad workers camped during the construction of the original route of the Oregon and California line through the Siskiyou Mountains.

preserved Kam Wah Chung and Company museum, but this successful business was not created in a vacuum. In order to fully appreciate the success of pioneering businessmen Lung On, and renowned herbalist Ing “Doc” Hay, we need to better understand their neighbors. Thanks to the field school students and staff, who hacked away through cobbles and compacted gravels for a week, we now have assemblages from two other households in the John Day Chinatown that we can use for comparison. This work was paired with some “digging” through the extensive museum archives, which will keep us busy for months to come.

Our final stop with the field school was two sites within the Ah Heng Mining Company, a Chinese mining operation along the Middle Fork of the John Day River. This camp is just one of many Chinese mining sites that the Malheur National Forest archaeologists have discovered, and the archaeological and documentary data that we are unearthing together has highlighted that the Chinese population in the area was *larger* and *lasted longer* than previously thought. The fact that many miners were quietly working in the forest up to the turn of the twentieth century (and beyond) is in contrast to the traditional narrative of Chinese miners leaving with the end of the gold rush and highlights one of the many strategies used by Chinese migrants to navigate the tumultuous Chinese exclusion era that lasted from 1882–1943.

So what’s next? While the field school is over, students and staff will continue to work on the material recovered this summer throughout the coming year. We will continue to seek out as many opportunities to share our findings with the interested public, and will be back in the field next summer!

To find out more, reach Chelsea Rose at rosec@sou.edu



Chelsea Rose is an archaeologist with the Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA) and co-host of Underground History, a monthly segment that airs during the Jefferson Exchange on JPR’s News & Information service.

**MILK
STREET**

CHRISTOPHER KIMBALL



Spicy Tomato Soup With Toasted Pasta & Feta

This simple vegetarian soup made hearty with toasted pasta was inspired by a recipe in “The Lebanese Kitchen” by Salma Hage. A cinnamon stick and a whole habanero chili, pierced a few times with a knife so the chili releases its flavor into the mix, give the soup complexity and spiciness. If you have an immersion blender, use it instead of a conventional blender and puree the soup directly in the pot until smooth.

50 MINUTES *plus cooling* | 4 SERVINGS

Don't blend the tomato mixture immediately after simmering. Allowing it to cool for about 15 minutes and filling the jar no more than two-thirds full helps ensure the liquid won't overflow when the blender is turned on. Starting on slow and gradually increasing the speed to high, rather than blending on high from the get-go, also helps prevent splatter.

Ingredients

2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more to serve
¾ Cup small-shape pasta, such as ditalini or elbow macaroni
2 Pounds ripe tomatoes quartered
1 Medium yellow onion, finely chopped
1 Habanero chili, kept whole but pierced about 4 times with the tip of a knife
1 Cinnamon stick
1 Teaspoon white sugar
Kosher salt and ground black pepper
Crumbled feta cheese, to serve

Directions

1. In a large pot over medium, combine 1 tablespoon of oil and the pasta. Cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl and set aside.
2. To the same pot, add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, the tomatoes, onion, chili, cinnamon, sugar, 1½ teaspoons salt, ½ teaspoon pepper and 1 cup water. Bring to a simmer over medium-high, cover and simmer, stirring once or twice, until the tomatoes and onions are completely softened, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand uncovered for about 15 minutes to cool slightly. Using tongs, gently squeeze the chili, allowing the juices to fall into the pot, then discard. Remove and discard the cinnamon.
3. Working in batches if needed, transfer the mixture to a blender, filling the jar no more than two-thirds full. Holding the lid in place, blend on low, then gradually increase to high and blend until smooth, about 1 minute. Return the puree to the pot, stir in another 2 cups water and bring to a simmer over medium-high.
4. Add the pasta and cook over medium, stirring often, until tender. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Serve sprinkled with feta, additional pepper and drizzled with oil.

Christopher Kimball's Milk Street in downtown Boston—at 177 Milk Street—is home to the editorial offices and cooking school. It also is where they record *Christopher Kimball's Milk Street* television and radio shows. *Milk Street* is changing how we cook by searching the world for bold, simple recipes and techniques. For more information, go to 177milkstreet.com. You can hear *Milk Street Radio* Sundays at 3:00pm on JPR's *News & Information* service.

Shots

Continued from page 36

The relationship, she says, helped her get through some difficult years and helped her stay away from drugs, which is what a lot of kids she knew were doing.

Connecting kids with an older adult is a way to give them the support of a mentor and a chance to feel like a valued member of the community, says Haglin.

"It's really quite powerful, the impact [of having a] caring adult who takes an interest in this child who is struggling a little bit, who just needs that one-on-one to give them that lift or boost they need," she says.

Previous studies in other communities show that an older mentor can help children in all kinds of ways, such as improving their academic performance, increasing their awareness and self-confidence and even reducing their risk of drug use.

Surveys by the Northland Foundation show that 85% of children and youths participating in AGE to age across north-eastern Minnesota say they have created new friendships with their peers and adults, says Haglin. And all the adults who participate in the program say it has increased interactions between older adults and youths in their community.

And for the older adults, says Meld, the chance to help kids gives them a sense of purpose.

"Ninety-five percent of older adults report a renewed sense of purpose and community connection," says Haglin. "And 94% of older adults report decreased feelings of isolation."

"Lifesavers"

It's a bright but cool summer morning and Bogema is dressed in a sweatshirt and jeans. She is expecting a group from Kids Plus to help her with some yardwork. "I'm dressed to work in the yard today," she says with a smile. "Even if I don't pull weeds, I'm ready to go."

Soon, a team of three – Lisa Belinger, an employee with Kids Plus, and two 14-year-old boys, named Mason Jokamaki and Darian Morgart – arrive at Bogema's.

Bogema takes them to her garage so they can grab rakes, and the team gets to work on her yard.

"Oh gosh you guys, thank you!" says Bogema. "Lifesavers!"

Not only is she grateful for their help, she also appreciates their company. Their presence, the sound of their voices – talking and joking with each other – comfort her, she says: "It's like I'm not alone."

The program has made her feel more plugged in to the community. In fact, this year, she signed up to volunteer herself. Starting this fall, she will join the group's Reading Pals program, where seniors read to children and help them improve their reading skills.

As for 14-year-old Darian, who's helping Bogema rake her yard, he says he decided to work with Kids Plus "just to hang out in the summer [with friends], because other than that we don't hang out normally."

People live far away from each other, so without a ride from a parent, seeing friends outside of school isn't easy, he says.

His friend Mason says he likes working with his friend. "It doesn't feel like work. It feels like fun," he says.

The program also makes them feel more connected to other people in the town. "If I'm doing something for other people ... and then, I see them further down the line, like somewhere else, then they recognize me and I recognize them," says Morgart. "It's just nice."

And those community connections can last well beyond the program, as they did for Anna Vierkandt.

Today, Vierkandt is happily married with two children. She is no longer in contact with her own mother, but thinks of her AGE to age mentor Coplan as her second mother and continues to stay in touch with her. Coplan was the first person she texted with pictures after she gave birth to her son earlier this year.

Coplan and the program changed her life, says Vierkandt, by giving her "a sense of purpose and belonging."

The program benefits the entire community, says Coplan. "Because all it does is pull everybody together."

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Rhithu Chatterjee is a health correspondent with NPR, with a focus on mental health. In addition to writing about the latest developments in psychology and psychiatry, she reports on the prevalence of different mental illnesses and new developments in treatments.

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AS IT WAS

As It Was is a co-production of Jefferson Public Radio and the Southern Oregon Historical Society. The series' script editor and coordinator is Kernan Turner, whose maternal grandmother arrived in Ashland in 1861 via the Applegate Trail.

As It Was airs Monday through Friday on JPR's Classics & News service at 9:30am and 1:00pm, and on the News & Information service at 9:57am and 9:57pm following the *Jefferson Exchange*.

Land Developer Proposes Giving Away 20-Acre Tracts

By Laurel Gerkman

An entrepreneur who owned large tracts of land in Curry County, Ore., Robert D. Hume, announced a land giveaway in March 1908.

Hume advertised in the *Wedderburn Radium* that he would distribute 20 acres each to 20 families.

His motives were to obtain a return from idle land and to dispose of it in a manner that continued to generate profit through his other enterprises.

Hume said each family would have 15 years to clear and cultivate the land and only have to pay property taxes and rent of \$2 an acre. As added incentive, Hume would provide a cow, pig, and a dozen chickens. The fam-

ilies would have free use of his sawmill and standing timber to make their own housing and fencing. Hume prohibited using the land for saloons or the sale of liquor.

If things worked out, Hume intended to divide and distribute another 15,000 acres in the same manner.

Hume was swamped with applications. He died a few months later of pneumonia, ending his grand settlement scheme before it started.

SOURCES: *Dodds, Gordon B. The Salmon King of Oregon. The University of North Carolina Press, 1959, pp. 65-69; "Back to the Soil." Wedderburn Radium, 19 Mar. 1908, p. 1.*

Farmers Strike It Rich As Gold Miners

By Gail Fiorini-Jenner

Two married brothers were farmers in their hometown of Red Bluff, Calif., when they decided to try their hand at cattle ranching. The brothers, John B. and Richard B. Graves, spent most of their money on 80 head of cows in 1890. They moved to Trinity County in search of good grazing ground and a place to build their homes.

The brothers lost their entire herd during a harsh first winter. They switched to farming, but with little success before becoming prospectors in 1895, occasionally finding a small gold pocket, which gave them a few dollars. However, one day on Coffee Creek they struck it big, even taking out a \$42,000 nugget (the equivalent of \$1.3 million in 2019 dollars).

News of the rich find attracted hundreds of prospectors to Trinity County. Prospectors Murphy and Burgess worked only a few days

to take out \$80,000 in gold [the equivalent today of \$2.47 million].

The brothers Graves settled permanently on Coffee Creek as miners and farmers. Their story hit several newspapers nationwide in August and September 1897, including the *Muskegon Chronicle* in Muskegon, Mich.

SOURCE: *Glessner, Jo. "Coffee Creek (Stream & Mining) & Coffee (Post Office)." History and Happenings: Acorns of Information About Local History and Genealogy, Squarespace.com, 27 Nov. 2012, historyandhappenings.squarespace.com/trinity-county/2012/11/27/coffee-creek-stream-mining-coffee-post-office.html. Accessed 14 July 2019.*

POETRY

VIRGINIA SHARKEY

California Hills in August

Blond light nuzzles bald tops.
Rocks jut out.
If this were not McNab Ranch, Mendocino County
it would be called "the slopes where burrs cover our socks."
Tiny splinters pierce our fingers as we clamber up bristly slopes.

The dry oak leaves love the rattlesnakes for company.
Deer freeze on sight.
Vultures glide.

From Day One on
the sky had found and married its blue.

On the Death of Paul Z.

Too hot, these aged, wrinkled-skin days
plunk us frankly on the nose

like the rake pole stepped on.
What props the zinnias up on this baked clay?

Many shriveled stems and still no water from the sky.
Others gone, too.

I'm glad clouds will be coming,
this blue overhead, uniformly hung, dismantled.

I like the kitchen's new pine-paneled ceiling less
than when the girders and black wires were exposed along the shadows.

The poet who examined death and stone
no more exhales or walks on gray concrete.

There'll be more and more wind flapping leaves
into all 360 degrees of a circle.

On the newest day so far dawn tapped out its feisty greeting to the roof:
an acorn bounced eight times and fell off.

Pure air, newly hatched, unlocks its box of tools,
carves awake the four corners with its clean chisel.

Way Up in the Hills

Mud cakes all four of my limbs.
My hair feels matted and the days have silted up.

When you live on the land
it comes into the house on boots.

There's no need to guess how the sun votes,
it's obvious: straight down the middle:

days hot,
nights cold.

Light finally rids its jacket in February,
the slender month when mustard weeds rise.

Slopes pare down to lank silhouettes.
Evening skims the scraggly hills,

shaves them bare with its lavender thin bone,
strews out over meadows a clean laundry of air.

Virginia Sharkey is an abstract painter who lives in Mendocino, California. She wrote these three poems when she lived near Ukiah, California, while living on a former sheep ranch off the grid and without a home phone (though one was available, on the side of a dirt road three miles away, stored in a mailbox). She lives with power, phone, and internet now. She teaches violin and performs in local symphonies, and also writes.

Writers may submit original poetry for publication in *Jefferson Journal*.

Email 3–6 poems, a brief bio, and your mailing address in one attachment to jeffmopoetry@gmail.com, or send 3–6 poems, a brief bio, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Amy Miller, Poetry Editor
Jefferson Journal
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Ashland, OR 97520

Please allow eight
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